

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Compt.*



SHAPPHARAN OF A NE'ER-DO-WELL.

GEORGE BURLEY;

HIS HISTORY, EXPERIENCES, AND OBSERVATIONS.

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CHAPTER IV.—THE VERY SHABBY MAN WHOM I MET
IN MR. FILBY'S SHOP.

I WAS between nine and ten years old; but long before this time I had become pretty familiar with the neighbourhood for some distance around Silver Square; and I had lately become rather useful to my grandfather in a variety of ways, among others, as an occasional messenger to more distant parts of London.

I was one day sent to a law stationer's in Fetter Lane

(if I remember rightly) for some small order, which was written down in a note; and, while waiting to hand this to the proprietor of the shop, I was struck by the sound of my grandfather's name once or twice repeated by him to an exceedingly shabby-looking man with whom he was in conversation, and who was speaking very earnestly, though in a low tone, as it seemed to me, of entreaty.

"I tell you no, Bix; I couldn't think of it; couldn't indeed," I heard the stationer say.

The shabby man muttered some more earnest words, the purport of which did not reach me; but I noted him more closely. He was tall, slight, and haggard. His

dark hair hung in long flakey tangles over his cheeks. He was unshaven; or, rather, he carried an ugly scrubbing-brush of beard of at least a week's growth upon his chin and upper lip. His countenance was sallow, almost to yellowness; originally it might have been a handsome face, but there was something stamped on it which made it appear repulsive to me, though I did not know why. I do know why now; that something was vice and profligacy.

I have said that the man, who was comparatively young, perhaps about thirty-two or three years of age, was shabbily dressed. His coat (a tight military frock, once blue, now faded to a dull kind of green) was white at the seams, out at the elbows, and ragged about the cuffs. It was buttoned so close up to the wearer's chin that no scrap of waistcoat or shirt was visible; and a high black military stock, without shirt collar, was buckled tightly round his neck. He wore drab kersey-mere trousers, very dirty and threadbare, strapped over a pair of fashionably-made boots, which I observed were old and split out at the sides. The man was evidently steeped in poverty; at the same time there was a pretentious air of breeding about him which told of better days.

The conversation continued: it was plain to me that the poor fellow was pressingly entreating some favour, which the other was determined not to grant.

"I wonder you should have the face to come to me with such a story," said the stationer, bluntly.

"Necessity, sheer necessity, Mr. Filby," returned the suppliant. "You have known me a good many years, sir," he added.

"Yes, I have, Bix," said Mr. Filby.

(Bix again! what did it mean?)

"The more the pity, perhaps you are disposed to say, Mr. Filby," rejoined the shabby fellow.

"Just the very words I was thinking of," retorted the stationer; "at any rate, I should be better off now if I had never known anything of you. You cannot deny that."

I could see that a dark flush for a moment suffused the stranger's cheek; but it passed away, and he smiled. "I don't deny that you have some little cause of complaint against me, Mr. Filby," he said, softly; "but nobody knows where the shoe pinches so well as he who wears it."

I looked down at the shabby man's feet, and wondered, in my boyish curiosity, whether his shoes pinching him had caused them to split across the toes; meanwhile the stationer, who understood the figure, which I did not, replied:—

"You never said a truer word, Bix" (Bix again! thought I); "the shoe has pinched me so sharply that I don't mean to put it on again."

"On my word and honour—" the man began, but was cut short by Mr. Filby with "Your what, Bix? Your what?" spoken, as it seemed to me, in a tone of disgust. "Don't talk to me about word and honour," he added.

"You are very hard, Mr. Filby," said the shabby man, smilingly; "but you shall have it your own way, sir. 'Tis the way of the world; when a poor wretch is down, keep him down—keep him down. Tread on him, trample on him: kick him—he can't help himself." And as he began to cry, or so I thought, I pitied him exceedingly, and set Mr. Filby down in my mind as a very cruel man, especially when he said, angrily:—

"And who wants to tread, and trample, and kick? You come here into my shop without being sent for, and ask me to do this, and that, and the other to bolster you up,

and when I tell you civilly that I can't and won't be mixed up with you and your schemes, because I have suffered enough from you already, you talk of being trod on, and trampled on, and kicked! That isn't civil language, sir."

"Don't be angry, Mr. Filby; pray, don't," pleaded the man, in a piteous tone. "I should not have applied such words to you, sir—you, who have stood my friend when nobody else would. But others have trampled on me and kicked me; you know they have, sir, you know it, Mr. Filby." The last words were spoken rather indistinctly, by reason of a handkerchief, which the speaker snatched hurriedly out of a hat lying on the counter, being applied to his face.

"Pho! pho!" exclaimed Mr. Filby, impatiently; "don't tell me about being deserted by your friends. I know all the rights and wrongs of that. There's never a man that I ever knew who had better friends than you have had, Bix, if you would have kept them. Talk of treading and trampling and kicking! Why, that's what you have been doing to every one of your friends these ten years past, and long before. I don't want to reproach you," added the stationer, cooling down a little in his warmth, "but when it comes to running down friends, you know, I have a right to speak out."

"I never meant running you down, Mr. Filby," said the shabby man, submissively. "But really now—" and he whispered again in so low a tone, as he leaned over the counter, that the words did not reach my ear. I could judge, however, that he was pressing some point very eagerly; and he wound up by saying, more loudly and energetically, "I should be able to repay you all—repay you all, sir."

Mr. Filby was obdurate, however, or appeared to be. "One word is as good as a thousand," said he, firmly. "I'll not do it, Bix. I've done a deal more than I had any right to do, out of respect to your connections; but there must be an end somewhere; and the end is come. As to repaying—pho, pho! But when I say I won't do anything more," he added, reluctantly, "I don't mean but what—there," and he slipped something into the suppliant's hand—"if that trifle will be any use."

"Thank ye kindly and heartily: it will give me a few more meals, Mr. Filby, before—" He applied the handkerchief (a brown cotton one) to his face again, and smothered the rest of his sentence in it. Then, carefully putting on his hat (it was brown, crushed and seedy), he withdrew lingeringly from the shop, leaving Mr. Filby at liberty to read my note.

"Dear, dear, dear!" said he, looking down upon me with a curious expression. "How remarkable, though; really! So you come from Mr. Bix, eh, my boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"And do you know that gen—that person who was talking to me just now?" he asked presently, as he was tying up my parcel.

"No, sir."

"And needn't want to," said he.

I returned home by way of Holborn. At the part of that street called Holborn Bridge there was in those days, and I believe there is now also, a large retail spirit house. I was passing by the door, when it opened, and, nearly stumbling over me, out came the shabby man wiping his mouth with the self-same brown cotton handkerchief which a quarter of an hour before had concealed and dried his tears of repentance.

"Hillo, young fellow!" he exclaimed, with a rich, liquory tone; "he didn't send you after me, did he?"

"Who, sir?"

"Old Filby—the stingy rascal. You were in his shop, you know, when I came out."

"Yes, sir: no, sir, he didn't send me after you," I said; and I passed on, with a catching of my breath, induced by the strong fumes which issued from the fellow's unclean mouth, as he stooped down to question me.

CHAPTER V.—MY GRANDFATHER'S PATRON MAKES HIS APPEARANCE.

ON my reaching Silver Square I proceeded at once to my grandfather's den, to deliver up the parcel, and, to my astonishment, found him closeted with a stranger.

"Lay it down, George, and——" he looked at the door, and nodded.

"Do not send the boy away, Mr. Bix," interposed the stranger, speaking with a foreign accent. "Your grandson, of whom you were speaking, I presume?" he added.

"My grandson, Mr. Falconer," replied my grandfather, gravely.

"Come and shake hands with me, my fine fellow," said the gentleman, with a smile. "You and I must be friends—and shall be, I think," he continued, as he drew me towards him, and looked me keenly in the face.

He was a singular-looking person. In times such as the present, of hirsute cultivation, there would have been nothing extraordinary in his appearance; for he had a fine, flowing, silky, though very gray beard, which descended to his breast; but, as I am writing now of days in which close shaving was the fashion, the singularity was marked and striking. There was such a kind expression of countenance, however, and so much quiet humour in the sparkling of his large dark eyes, that I could but return his gaze with confidence. "Yes, we shall do capitally well together," he said presently, as he smoothed down my hair with his broad, but delicately white hand, while he yet detained me between his knees.

He was strangely clad, wearing as an over-garment a kind of loose gabardine, of light colour and some delicately fine and soft material. This was fastened round his waist by a broad band of red leather, and, being thrown open in front—it being a hot day in summer—a silken waistcoat was displayed, only partly covering a shirt of dazzling whiteness, fastened at the collar by a narrow riband, while the collar itself lay folded down over the wearer's shoulder. Other portions of the gentleman's attire were equally uncommon, including a hat of Leghorn straw, conically shaped and broad-brimmed, which lay on the floor at his feet. If I add to the above that the visitor might have been at least sixty years of age, though he seemed scarcely so much, my description may suffice.

"This gentleman is Mr. Falconer, of whom you have sometimes heard me speak, George," said my grandfather, by way of explanation. And then, without waiting a reply, he went on with the business, or conversation, which my entrance had momentarily interrupted.

"But why, my dear sir," said my grandfather, "should you be lodging at an inn, while you have a house of your own here, where you have a right to command every attention?"

"It is kind of you to say so, Mr. Bix," returned the *émigré*; "but there is my servant and my luggage."

"I think you will manage to find room enough in this house, sir," returned my grandfather, with a smile.

"Doubtless; but you have only one female servant in your establishment—my old friend Betsy, I see; and she might disapprove of visitors."

"Only one servant, combining housekeeper, cook, housemaid, and parlourmaid in one person," continued my grandfather; "but Betsy Miller is a woman of much strength of mind and many resources; and I will answer that she shall be equal to the occasion. At any rate,

we will secure extra help if that be all; and, seriously, it must never be said, Mr. Falconer, that you were not admitted into your own house after so many years' absence."

"It shall be as you please, my friend," said Mr. Falconer, who seemed to have been wearied with previous discussions of the subject; "and in that case I will take the liberty of sending my luggage to-morrow."

"Meanwhile, your rooms shall be prepared, sir," added my grandfather. "And if it will please you now just to examine these vouchers, and go through the accounts"—my grandfather laid his hand on an immense pile of papers as he spoke.

"My dear friend, we will take some other time for that, if it must be done at all," said Mr. Falconer, in a sort of serio-comic dismay; "though why it should be done I cannot tell. I am perfectly satisfied with the balances you have been so good as to forward to me from time to time. And at any rate we won't plunge into business the first hour of our meeting."

My grandfather looked disappointed. He had kept his books in such apple-pie order, and had so long looked forward to a personal settling up of the accounts, that he was perhaps surprised that his eagerness was not shared by his patron. There was no help for it, however; and the conversation turned to other matters, in the course of which, being set at liberty by Mr. Falconer, and obedient to a silent motion from my grandfather, I left the room. Presently I heard the opening and closing of the hall door; and then I knew that the visitor was gone.

I had intended to tell my grandfather of the strange, shabby fellow I had seen in Mr. Filby's shop, and of his being repeatedly called by my grandfather's own name. But the newer surprise had put the older one out of my thoughts, and through the rest of that day there was such a running to and fro on the part of Betsy Miller, and such anxious preparations for Mr. Falconer and his servant, who were expected on the morrow to take up their abode in the house, that I had no time to speak either to my grandfather or my friend Betsy.

In the course of the following day arrived Mr. Falconer's luggage, in charge of his servant, a brisk foreigner, who, being unable to speak English, was obliged to carry on all communications with my grandfather and his housekeeper in dumb motions. Meanwhile, Betsy had slipped out on the previous evening and hired a woman to assist her in her house-work. So, by the time Mr. Falconer appeared, later in the day, we were all in a high and polished state of readiness to receive him.

Our visitor, or rather our master and patron, remained more than two months at his old house in Silver Square. Whether my grandfather ever inveigled him into his den, and compelled him to look into the state of his affairs, I am uncertain; but I rather think he did, for on one occasion I observed a peculiar smile of satisfaction on my grandfather's countenance, which indicated that a burden had been removed from his mind. I am not uncertain on one point, however; namely, that never in my life had so much pleasure-taking fallen to my lot as was comprised within the few weeks of Mr. Falconer's residence in London. Scarcely a day passed, indeed, without some sight-seeing of a pleasurable nature, and in which the white-bearded gentleman did not choose me for his companion. Of course it would be easy to set this down as caprice on his part; but it is as easy, and more truthful, to say that Mr. Falconer avowed his partiality for the society

of children in general, and that I happened to please and amuse him while he ministered to my pleasure and amusement. How many sights I then saw, and to what extent I was treated with almost all kinds of delicacies all the time this dissipation lasted, I am not able to say now with any degree of certainty; but I very well recollect a fit of temporary illness which came upon me, entirely owing to stuffing—so the doctor who was called in to prescribe for me said—to *stuffing*; and I remember an embargo was laid by Betsy Miller upon Mr. Falconer's taking me into any more confectioners' shops during the remainder of his stay in London.

CHAPTER VI.—A MYSTERY CLEARED UP, AND ANOTHER ENTERED UPON.

ONE day—it was the day after my sickness, just referred to—I was alone in the house with Betsy Miller, my grandfather having stepped out on a business call upon one of the tenants in the Square, and Mr. Falconer having walked out in another direction, attended by his foreign servant.

The door-bell rang.

"It is only your grandfather come back, Hurly," said Betsy. "Go and open the door for him, please; my hands are all pudding."

And so they were, for Betsy was preparing dinner. I went into the hall, therefore, and opened the door.

Not to my grandfather, however, but to the self-same shabby, gin-drinking mendicant whom I had some time before met in Mr. Filby's shop. I knew him at once by his greeny-blue frock-coat buttoned up to the chin, by his greasy military stock, his dirty drab trousers, and split boots; most of all, however, by his sallow and sinister countenance.

"Hallo!" said I, in the extremity of my surprise.

I said "hallo!" a second time, when the man, pushing me aside, and taking no further notice of me (for, though I recognised him, he did not remember me), walked into the hall, threw his seedy hat down on the marble table, and asked, in a loud, insolent voice—

"Where's the old man?"

"Who, sir?" I wanted to know, as I cautiously retreated from the intruder and edged my way towards the habitable part of the house.

"Old Bix," returned the man, sharply. "Where's old Bix? And how long has he set up a house-boy?"

"I am not a house-boy," said I, indignantly. "Mr. Bix is my grandfather. What do you want?" I added, rather more boldly, for I heard Betsy's footsteps approaching from the kitchen.

"Your what? Your grandfather?" exclaimed the shabby man, stretching out his hand towards me; but I was beyond his reach, and the marble table was between us. "Do you mean to tell me that you are Polly Burley's boy?"

I was spared the trouble of replying to this question by Betsy Miller, who now appeared upon the scene, and who, rapidly passing me, advanced to the side of the intruder, and, regardless of her "pudding" hands, seized his outstretched arm and looked him steadily in the face.

"You here, William Bix?—you here again?" she said, sternly.

"Yes, I am here, and here again," he replied, with an attempt at bravado; though it was easy to see that he quailed beneath the eye of the indignant woman.

"What do you mean by it?" she asked.

"Mean? What do I mean by it? I mean that I have a right to come to—to wherever my father is; and I'll have my right too. Mean? I mean that I want food,

and I'll have it; that I want money, and I'll have it. I am not going to be frightened away by your looks, I can tell you, Betsy Miller. Come, now, hands off, woman, and let your master know that I am here. Or, shall I find him for myself? That will be the best way, I suppose," and so saying my uncle William (for I knew now who the shabby man was) suddenly disengaged himself from Betsy's hold, swung himself round, and was stalking to the door of my grandfather's office, when, once more, the determined woman confronted him.

"Not another step, William Bix. Take another step that way, and——"

"Tcha!" exclaimed the man, fiercely. "Do you think you have got a boy to deal with? The time's past and gone when you could do what you liked with me. Let me pass, I say;" and he attempted to evade the faithful guardian, but to no purpose.

"Take another step that way, William, and as sure as you stand there a living man, and I stand here a living woman, you shall be lodged in Newgate before night. You know me of old, and that, if ever I said I'd do a thing, the thing was done."

Uncle William made a feint of laughing; but it was a failure, and his cheek became blanched. Also, instead of making any further advances towards the office, he seated himself on the marble table, swinging his feet, as he replied—

"I know you to be as obstinate as a mule, and as vixenish as a cat; but talk of Newgate to me—to me, ha, ha!"

Betsy made no immediate reply, but, drawing a chair towards her, she sat down at about three feet from the intruder.

"I sit here till you leave the house you have brought such sorrow on, William Bix," said she; "and I wonder you are not ashamed to look me in the face."

"Why should I be ashamed to look you in the face?" he asked, sullenly.

"Because I know your wickedness. And that's the reason you are not ashamed, I suppose. The more wicked people are, the less shame they have. But, if you have any shame left in you," she added, "I should think it would come uppermost at seeing yourself exposed before a child like that." Betsy pointed to me as she spoke.

The unhappy man muttered something which I did not hear, and then more loudly asked, "And what's the boy to me?"

"Nothing to you, William; nothing, nothing. May he ever be kept from being anything to you, or having anything to do with you. Poor little fellow!"

I may just observe here that, beyond the fact that I had an uncle somewhere in the world, all knowledge of his antecedents had been kept from me, both by my grandfather and by Betsy Miller. The reader may suppose, therefore, how much I was taken by surprise, not only by the unexpected invasion, but by Betsy's strong and stern language, which, put together with what I had heard in Mr. Filby's shop, and seen that same day, gave me a fearful idea of my uncle's wickedness, which was not abated when he burst out into a discordant laugh, and said, mockingly—

"Poor little fellow! Oh, that's the go, is it? The poor little fellow had better keep out of my way, then. What business has he here?"

"More business than you have, William Bix," rejoined Betsy, promptly; "and once more I ask you why you are come back to London, and to this house above all others?"

"I've told you before that I am come for what I can

get—money, money; and money I'll have, or I'll know the reason why. Where's my father?" he again demanded, in a bullying tone.

"Your father is out," responded Betsy.

"And you in the house all alone?" asked my uncle, with eager, flashing eyes. "But of course you are; and I have a good mind to—." He glanced around him, and seemed preparing to spring from his seat on the table; but a look from Betsy seemed to cause him to shrink from his half-formed purpose.

"You have a good mind to take what you can get, I suppose you mean to say," she said, calmly; "but you won't do it, William. And I can tell you something else: you will get nothing by waiting here. And you would be anywhere else rather than here at this minute, if you knew—." Here she suddenly paused.

"If I knew what?"

"What I am not going to tell you. I have altered my mind; and you shall wait as long as you please. You said just now that you came for food. Is it true that you are hungry, William?"

The very question seemed to rouse his craving appetite. "Do I look as if I had been feasting lately?" he asked.

He did not look like it. I had been watching the invader all the time the singular and, to me, inexplicable conference had been going on. It is little to say that I had then never seen a more famished-looking man, with cheeks so hollow, and eyes so wildly staring: it is more to the purpose that I have never since seen hunger so strongly marked on any countenance. My uncle looked badly enough when I first saw him in Mr. Filby's shop: he looked worse now. I have no doubt that Betsy Miller noticed the poor fellow's hungry looks, for her compassion was evidently roused, in spite of her determined indignation.

"You shall have food," she said; "but you must eat it here." And then she directed me to go into the kitchen and bring a loaf and cheese, and a knife.

I obeyed, and Betsy, taking the knife in her own hands—the pudding being dried on them by this time—cut a large slice and handed it to my uncle.

He took it and ate it—rather, let me say, devoured it, as a dog might.

"I must have drink too," he said, chokingly, when the bread and cheese had nearly disappeared. Betsy whispered to me, and I again went into the kitchen, returning with a jug of water.

"This! Is this all you are going to give me?" said he, seizing the jug and looking into it with disgust. "Water! only water!"

"Only water. It would have been better for you if you had drunk only water all through your life, William Bix," said Betsy.

"And now," she continued, when the recently fed man was wiping his mouth after his repast, "you had better go."

"I have not got all I came for yet," he answered.

"Do you want to kill your father outright?" she asked, reproachfully. "Haven't you done enough already to shorten his life? But what's the use of asking you such questions, William? It will be better for you to go before worse comes of it."

"I don't mean to go till I have got what I came for." He spoke with greater confidence, now that he had eaten, and drunken, and was refreshed. "I can wait; time isn't of much object to me," he said, insolently.

"And I can wait too," rejoined Betsy.

At that moment came another ring at the hall door, and my uncle's countenance was lighted up with a sort

of malignant triumph. "Ah! I thought he wouldn't be long," he said; adding, "and I warn you, mistress, to leave me alone with the old man. A pretty thing, indeed, for a woman like you to be thrusting yourself in between a man and his own father."

"Open the door, Hurly," Betsy whispered to me; and I did so. It was not my grandfather who entered this time, but Mr. Falconer, followed by Alphonse, his Swiss servant. Mr. Falconer spoke to me in his cheery way, directly I opened the door, and then he passed on.

To come to a full stop the moment his eyes rested on my uncle William, who, pale, trembling, and dismayed, seemed at once to shrink within himself at that steady, silent gaze, as at some dreadful apparition. Then he stealthily removed himself from the table, picked up his hat, retreated step by step backwards, until he was within a few paces of the yet open door; when, suddenly turning, he would have darted through the doorway, but was arrested by a firm, commanding word from Mr. Falconer.

"Stop!"

In another moment the two men stood confronting each other.

"Is this the way in which your promise is kept, William?" demanded my grandfather's patron, sternly.

"What was I to do, sir? what am I to do?" whined the wretched man, in tremulous tones. "Look at me, Mr. Falconer: see to what I am reduced."

"By your own abominable vices and crimes. But I will waste no words upon you. You came for money, I suppose. How much?"

My uncle's eye kindled covetously, in spite of his evident terror, as he saw a purse drawn from Mr. Falconer's pocket. "It isn't for beggars to be choosers, sir," he said.

In another moment I heard the chink of money, and my poor uncle's murmured thanks.

"Silence! You offend more by your fawning than by your past ingratitude," said Mr. Falconer. "And now, listen to me. Let me but know that you ever enter this house again, uninvited, and the consequences of your former crime shall fall on you. Now begone!"

There was no need for a second command. In another moment the culprit was out of sight, and the door closed upon him.

"Do not tell your grandfather of this visit, Hurly," said Mr. Falconer to me presently, after he had held a short explanatory whispered consultation with Betsy Miller; "it would cause him a great deal of pain; and you don't want to do that, I am sure."

I said truly that I did not, and promised faithfully to keep my part of the secret. But it dwelt long on my mind. What could the mystery be?

A MODEL MANUFACTURING VILLAGE.

"It is some years since I was there, and I cannot tell what changes may have taken place; but I will tell you about a village nestling under the hills, a little way from the line as you run towards Lancaster. The quiet houses lie among the fields and gardens which fringe the lower slopes of Slian Fell. The cottages seem all charmingly clean and neat; and many of them show that their inmates have considerable taste, and even a fine sense of beauty. The way in which every little available nook in front of the dwellings is made to bear its knot of flowers is quite refreshing. Indeed, looking at the whole, and catching a peep here and there of the arrangement of the apartments inside, the impression upon my mind, when I first

saw it, was that of a people who had really been taught the art of making humble life comfortable and happy. Nor did a closer scrutiny at all change that impression. A little off from the village is a cotton-mill, which, thanks to some care about appearances, stands out cheerfully against the dark-blue background of Arras Fell. The population of the place, numbering between three and four hundred, are more or less dependent on the mill. The proprietor and managers live on the spot among the people, and are looked at affectionately as members of the community, and the natural guardians of its rights and blessings; indeed, they are bound up in the very life of the body, and form its heart of hearts. They seem practically to carry out the principle, that they are called, in all fairness and honesty, to care for the domestic, moral, and spiritual welfare of those who have been gathered and are held together to give effect to their business plans, and that they ought to do their best to provide, as far as they can, for the comfort of the population which supplies them with labour. Nor can anybody doubt their success. A neat district chapel affords all needful accommodation for religious service, and is decently and devoutly attended. A vigorous day-school supplies the children with instruction. But what I was most struck with was the happy result of attention to the family comfort of the people. All that is possible towards making our operative's home his brightest place on earth was done. Every married couple attached to the mill had a cottage on easy terms. Every cottage has its garden plot, and a place for a pig; while each household may rent a cow of the proprietor, at a low rate, so as to have a full supply of milk without any risk as to casualties among the cattle. Better still: the married women are to be keepers at home, and are free to make and keep every man's hearth what it should be, and what it cannot be without the daily care and oversight of the wife. In very few cases do married women go to the mill, and in those few cases it is only for a limited time, and for occasional light work, such as will not seriously interfere with home comfort. The religious consistency, moral health, neighbourly peace, and social happiness of the village are indicated by the fact that it has neither public-house, beer-shop, nor policeman within its borders. I never saw anything more lovely in its way than that little manufacturing village: a model of quiet activity; a standing proof that healthy stir is quite in keeping with repose. Thanks and honour to those who have so wisely and kindly laid themselves out and used their influence for the benefit of the people whom they employ. One great secret of the whole is the fatherly presence of the employer among the employed, and the silent influence of his exemplary home."

Such was, in substance, the description given by Mr. Jackson, the old and confidential clerk of a wealthy manufacturer, who had consulted him about some plans for the improvement of the condition of his work-people.

"Really, Jackson," said Mr. Ashton, "that is a charming picture—quite a study, one may say; and I have made up my mind to see and know more about it. But, then, it cannot be fairly set up as an example for us, you know; such things may be done in a snug little place like that, where the managers have everything their own way, and so many means of making things comfortable for the people; but what is the use of talking about cottages, and gardens, and pigs, and cows, and flowers, and all that sort of thing here, among brick, and chimneys, and smoke?"

"True, sir; I did not suppose that this case would apply to us as an example in every respect; but I think

it suggests enough to help towards some plan for brightening things even here, and for making the homes of our town operatives as much like the homes of happy human beings as they can be under the circumstances. We have been in danger, I fear, of having a 'great gulf fixed' between the social classes in some of our manufacturing districts. There has been a growing tendency to widen the distance between the residences of employers and employed. Those whose presence and sympathy and example might have some daily influence for good have, I think, shown themselves too willing to pass out farther and farther from the centres of business action and toil, leaving the huddled multitudes to seethe in the great pits of social corruption."

"Stay, Jackson; you have some facts on your side, but don't let your feelings over-colour them. Tell me what is to be done? Are those who have gathered capital by the sweat of their brow and brain never to enjoy the fruit of their labour? Are we for ever to deny ourselves the benefit and pleasure of fresh air and rural quietness, when we have the means at command? Must we stay, and seethe too, in these crowded pits of corruption, as you called them?"

"No, sir, I won't say that; although, as you know, there was a time in the history of our manufacture and commerce when, though capitalists and merchants might have their country retreats, they were still known somehow, as residents among their people. Their town mansions seemed to shelter the operatives' homes, and to do them honour too; and those by whose labour they gathered their capital learnt to be cheerful, under the feeling that masters and men were fellow-townsmen, and had kindred hearts as well as common interests."

"That's all very fine, Jackson; but what's to be done now?"

"Ah, sir, you put a hard question; I confess I am not yet prepared with a perfect remedy. Still, I can't help regretting that such masses should have been allowed to fall, as they have in too many cases, into such social carelessness, unhealthiness, and discomfort. I don't know whether it could have been prevented, but one feels that the existing state of things is a misfortune. There can be no question, however, that those who have been chiefly the means of gathering the masses, or those whom the labour of the masses has helped to lift into a position of wealth and influence and command, are bound by the most sacred principles and feelings to put themselves with honest purpose to the work of practically solving the problem. How can the downward tendency of the operative class be most certainly checked, or how can the largest possible amount of comfort be infused into its domestic life?"

"What is to be done, then?"

"Well, sir, excuse me; but I think the homes around us, even the humblest, would gradually gather comfort if our people were once convinced and made to feel that their employers were thoroughly one with them, and that from true sympathy they were doing their best to make every man's dwelling what they would like it to be if, under like circumstances, it were their own. It is difficult, I know, to do this in great 'concerns,' and it may require some sacrifices before it is effected. But it is possible to do a good deal in this direction. I remember, for instance, a large cotton-mill in the north, in the midst of a dense smoke-clouded population. It was beautiful to see the owner acting the father over and among his 'hands.' When I saw the mill there was scarcely a 'hand' in it that had not been brought up there from childhood, and there were many gray-headed men, men who could look around and see old friends still

about them, and their own children, and the children of their early companions, rising to take their places. The proprietors belonged to the 'Society of Friends,' and they had in this case proved themselves true 'friends' to all under their care, for they had really created an agreeable scene of cheerfulness and cleanliness, as far as cleanliness can be kept on mill premises in such a town; it was indeed as cheerful and as clean a picture of labour as I ever saw in the district. I found, too, that every home was watched and cared for as diligently as if it were a part of the concern. Periodical recreation was provided for all belonging to the firm; and on the most jolly occasions, I was told, the well-regulated hospitality of the kind-hearted employers was scarcely ever known to be abused. It should not be forgotten that the chief proprietor's family was often resident near enough to show themselves active co-operators with him in promoting the domestic order, industry, and enjoyment of the households belonging to the mill. That, perhaps, was the secret of greatest power in the case."

"Would you have us settle down, then, Jackson, for life, amidst the darkness and dirt of these streets?"

"Well, sir, some of us must, at all events, or the market would get no supplies, and things here would hardly be kept a-going; and after all, you know, sir, very few of those who have the deepest stake in the town 'concerns' are unused to life in the midst of them: indeed, it is their native air; and I have a notion, though I hope my plainness is not offensive, that if our great employers, who have known what business life is, would be content, as the business men of former times were, to stick by the old place, and make themselves a part of society in it, much that is now dark would get brightened, and everything would become better under their eye, and be kept better too. For their own sake, as well as their men's, they would naturally surround themselves with a good neighbourhood, and for the credit of their firms they would secure for all who belong to them as much as could be got of breathing-room, and decent dwelling-place, and light, and air, and water, food for the mind, and exercise for the heart, and, in short, a thousand things which a population is blest with while under kind oversight and the influence of instructive example, and which can never be known under any other circumstances."

"Come, come, now, Jackson, tell the truth; you would not like to be shut up here all your days with these chimneys always in sight."

"Why, as to that, sir, I see no other prospect for myself. And, with regard to the chimneys, it would be very foolish in me to fall out with them; but for them, I suppose, I should not be what I am. I have got on and up a bit so far among them; and, after all, I rather like the feeling expressed by a very elegant lady of whom I heard the other day. She was standing looking out from a window of her mansion with a visitor, when the question was put, not, as I think, in very good taste, under the circumstances, 'Why have you built just here, so as to have your eye met by these mill chimneys?' 'Well,' was the reply, 'the fact is, they are old friends, and there is rather a close connection between those tall friends and this comfortable home of ours. Without the one, it may be, we should not have had the other; and then, those chimneys mark the dwelling-places of my dear people, in ministering to whose comfort I find some of my richest pleasures.' Ah, sir, that is a happy lady, and happy are the people who have such a lady's husband as their employer. Such employers, you know, sir, have means and opportunity enough of changing air and scene now and then, just as they please; and it strikes me that

we get more benefit from the country, and find deeper enjoyment amidst the beauties and grandeur of nature, when we visit them after intervals of home residence, than when we fix ourselves down for ever and see nothing but the same fields and trees, hill-side or valley. Nor, for my part, do I see what one would gain over town life, as to air or scene, by squatting in what is called a villa in the suburbs, where you have just smoke enough to spoil all green things, and where your utmost privilege is to

'Breathe clouds of dust, and call it country air.'

It is sad to see the working of that discontented and restless spirit which drives people away from the spot in which, after all, they have the deepest interest, and in which their life-task has been successfully wrought—that spirit which keeps them in the uncomfortable and worse than useless position of employers who are neither resident nor non-resident among the people whom Providence has thrown under their charge. A man may long for rest and pine for quietness in a country life; if so, and he thinks he has sufficient resources in himself to warrant the trial, let him know when he has means enough to secure the desired enjoyment and retire to it, leaving those who are prepared for business action to try their hand and take their turn. And as to the matter of personal comfort, I don't suppose that all the clergymen and medical men who live in smoky, crowded towns prefer these places to all others. But they live where the call of duty requires them. Masters and employers ought also to feel it a duty to attend to the welfare of those by whose toil they became possessed of the wealth of which they are only stewards, and for the right use of which they will have to render an account to God."

"You are right, Jackson: you are right. Your heart is thoroughly and properly in the matter. The thing shall not be lost sight of, I assure you; and I hope something after your style may be done, for my own benefit as well as the comfort of those around me. It shall be so if I can do it. Write down any plans or suggestions that occur to you, and they shall be well considered. I feel that I have more duties, and my people more claims, than have hitherto been attended to. We must see to this, and hope for God's guidance and blessing to carry out what is right."

OXFORD AND ITS COLLEGES.

III.

In a recent debate in the House of Commons one of the principal speakers dwelt on the effect of the wonderful external beauty, the great history, and the glorious associations of the University of Oxford upon an ordinarily sensitive mind, and said that he did not much envy the temper or sentiments of a person who could walk unmoved among the memories of the illustrious dead of the University, who might be said to

"Pass

Through the same gateways, sleep where they have slept,
Wake where they waked, range that enclosure old—
That garden of great intellects."

This feeling will especially be present in the mind of the traveller who, after lingering for a while on the beautiful bridge arched over the Cherwell, and admiring the prospect of lawns and waters, prepares to visit Magdalen. Before entering its precincts, he will notice the beautiful school, designed by Pugin, at its threshold, which the college has built for its choristers, and of which the late venerable President, Dr. Routh, laid the foundation when

in his ninety-fifth year. This last President of Magdalen, and one of its most illustrious members, survived to his hundredth year, and, as he knew in his youth Dr. Theophilus Leigh, Master of Balliol, who also survived to the same age, he was able to speak from personal information concerning events of the time of the Stuarts. A few sentences from Lord Macaulay's "History of England" will appropriately introduce our mention of Magdalen College:—

"Magdalen College, founded by William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor, is one of the most remarkable of our academical institutions. A graceful tower, on the summit of which a Latin hymn is annually chanted by choristers at the dawn of May Day, caught, far off, the eye of the traveller who came from London. As he approached he found that this tower arose from an embattled pile, low and irregular, yet singularly venerable, which, embowered in verdure, overhung the sluggish waters of the Cherwell. He passed through a gateway overhung by a noble oriel, and found himself in a spacious cloister, adorned with emblems of virtues and vices rudely carved in greystone by the masons of the fifteenth century. The table of the Society was plentifully spread in a stately refectory, hung with painting, and rich with fantastic carving. The services of the church were performed morning and evening in a chapel which had suffered much violence from the Reformers, and much from the Puritans, but which was, under every disadvantage, a building of eminent beauty, and which has in our own time been restored with rare taste and skill. The spacious gardens along the river-side were remarkable for the size of the trees, among which towered conspicuous one of the vegetable wonders of the island, a gigantic oak, older by a century, men said, than the oldest college in the University.

"The statutes of the Society ordained that the Kings of England and Princes of Wales should be lodged in their house. Edward IV had inhabited the building while it was still unfinished. Richard III had held his court there, had heard disputations in the hall, had feasted there royally, and had rewarded the cheer of his hosts by a present of fat bucks from his forests. Two heirs-apparent of the Crown, who had been prematurely snatched away—Arthur, the elder brother of Henry VIII; and Henry, the elder brother of Charles I—had been members of the college. Another prince of the blood, the last and best of the Roman Catholic archbishops, the gentle Reginald Pole, had studied there. In the time of the Civil Wars Magdalen had been true to the cause of the Crown: there Rupert had fixed his quarters, and before some of his most daring enterprises his trumpets had been heard sounding to horse through those quiet cloisters."

Formerly, on the site of the present college, there stood an ancient hospital, dedicated to St. John the Baptist: this was placed outside the old city walls, to guard the ferry across the river, and to serve as a hospital to the pilgrims who should be visiting the shrine of St. Frideswide. The "pilgrims' wicket" is still discernible in the old walls. Some remains of this hospital are still to be seen in the low embattled buildings towards the street. When the Duke of Wellington was Chancellor of Oxford, an office in which he has been succeeded by the Earl of Derby, entering the city, he asked Mr. Croker what the structure on his right hand was. "That is the wall which James II ran his head against," was the answer. This was an allusion to the most memorable occasion in which Magdalen figures in English history, when James II violated the privileges of the body and ejected their chosen President, John

Hough, in favour of one of his own Roman Catholic minions. This was, perhaps, the proximate cause of the English Revolution and the expulsion of the Stuart dynasty.

Henry VI granted to William of Waynflete (so called from the name of his birthplace in Lincolnshire) the royal license to found this college; but, from the troubles of the time, or from the fact that he was busy about the royal buildings at Windsor and Eton, the great quadrangle was not begun till the ensuing reign. In 1481 the founder visited the college, bringing with him many books and manuscripts. We enter the college through a stately gateway designed by Mr. Pugin, with niched statues of Mary Magdalen and John the Baptist, to whom the old hospital was dedicated, and William of Waynflete, the founder. Entering the quadrangle, you are probably first struck by a stone pulpit called St. John's Pulpit, where a sermon used always to be preached on St. John's Day. The ground and surrounding buildings were then decked out with boughs and rushes in commemoration of the preaching in the wilderness. The custom has now been altogether discontinued. "The last time that a sermon was preached here was by one Bacon on a wet day." "The rain hath spoiled both the greens and the bacon" was a joke made at the time by a Magdalen wag; and this, combined with the fact that the then President died of a cold caught on the occasion, overthrew the custom (Murray's Handbook*). On the left are the President's lodgings. It was here that the pious Bishop Horne wrote his Commentary on the Psalms. Through the President's house we gain access to the founder's chamber, with its noble oriel over the farther gate, where many princes of the royal blood have been entertained. This and the two adjacent rooms have been beautifully fitted up with carving, tapestry, and painted glass.

We now direct attention to some of the details of the college, which James I called "the most absolute thing in Oxford." We will first notice the chapel. We will suppose that the visitor has armed himself with an order from some member of the Society, as, from the general pressure for admission, this regulation has been found necessary. The vocal music at Magdalen Chapel is always exceedingly good, helped by a splendid organ, large enough for a cathedral. It is to be observed that the general magnificence of the present chapel is almost entirely attributable to the modern restorations. The large west window, in chiaroscuro, represents the Last Judgment: the east window, representing Christ bearing the cross, has been attributed, not with much reason, to Murillo. The stalls of oak and the organ-screen of stone harmonize well with the "dim religious light" of the painted glass. Next we look at the tower. It is said Wolsey, as bursar, was concerned with building the tower, and exceeded his resources, in consequence of which he was obliged to leave Oxford, and this apparent failure proved the origin of his subsequent fortunes. The writer remembers mounting this beautiful tower at five o'clock one morning of the 1st of May, to hear the Latin hymn, of which Lord Macaulay makes mention—

"Te Deum Patrem colimus,
Te laudibus prosequimur."

* Mr. Murray's "Handbook for Travellers in Berks, Bucks, and Oxfordshire," contains a very careful and excellent account of the University and city of Oxford. Messrs. J. H. Parker and Sons, the well-known Oxford publishers, have issued several valuable books on the colleges and churches of Oxford. Reference may also be permitted to two articles in the last edition of the "Encyclopedia Britannica," by the present writer. Other works referred to are named in their place.

On the summit of the tower we felt the massive structure very perceptibly sway to and fro; but we were told that this was rather a proof of the stability of the building than of any insecurity attaching to it. The whole of the bells, which Anthony Wood calls "most

speculation and amusement. One of the Fellows of the college, at the request of a President, wrote an amusing little thesis in Latin, which is carefully preserved in the library, in which he ingeniously argues that those grotesque figures are all emblematical, and designed to



MAGDALEN COLLEGE.

tunable and melodious," were probably being rung at the time. We now pass through the Gothic cloistered quadrangle. The entrance is beneath the gateway to which we have before alluded, surmounted by a beautiful tower, with canopied statues, and a fine groined vault. We then enter the "venerable" cloisters, as we instinctively feel them to be, although much of the fine effect has been produced by modern restorations. It may be said that the President and Fellows of Magdalen, "a pious, learned, and most charitable body," as they have been called, spare no pains or expense in everything that may promote the use and beauty of their edifices and grounds. The interior of the quadrangle is ornamented with a series of grotesque figures, which have occasioned much

furnish a learned and religious society with many great moral lessons. Thus he takes the figures of the lion and the pelican: "The former is the emblem of courage and vigilance, the latter of parental tenderness and affection. Both together express the complete character of a good college governor, and accordingly are placed under the windows of the President's lodgings." The following moral is drawn from the hippopotamus with his young one upon his shoulders: "This is the emblem of a good tutor, or Fellow of a college, who is set to watch over the youth of the Society, and by whose prudence they are to be led through the dangers of their first entrance into the world." On the western side of the quadrangle is the restored library. Gibbon, in his

interesting autobiography, in which, however, he does not speak with much reverence of Magdalen College, has an interesting reference to the contents of the library. "The shelves of the library groan under the weight of the Benedictine folios, of the editions of the Fathers, and the collections of the Middle Ages, which have issued from the single library of St. Germain des Prés at Paris." The books are now arranged in large handsome stalls of finest oak, and on the panels of the cases are copies of the Buccleuch Vandykes, the only copies that have been permitted by their owner. The library appropriately contains the portrait of the founder, and, at the sides of the bay window, marble busts of Locke and Bacon. At the south-eastern corner of the quadrangle a flight of low steps beneath an elliptical arch conduces to the old oaken wall. This wainscoted wall contains nine illustrative carvings, chiefly relating to the history of Mary Magdalen, with scrolls of Scripture texts in Latin. The room is hung round with portraits of benefactors and members of the foundation. Among these is the portrait of Henry Prince of Wales, and elsewhere are the ostrich plumes, as Prince Henry matriculated as a member of the college. Other portraits are those of the founder, the famous cardinals Pole and Wolsey, Prince Rupert, Addison, Dr. Sacheverell, Archbishop Boulter, Bishops Fox, Hough, Horne, Phillpotts, Dean Colet, Dr. Hammond, Dr. Butler, Dr. Routh, etc. The college has produced two cardinals, four archbishops, nearly forty bishops, and many other eminent men. At the end of the hall is a music-gallery, and beneath it a passage technically called the *greens*, preserving the mediæval arrangement of three doorways, to the kitchen, pantry, and buttery. In the collection of college plate is the founder's cup, with a statue of Mary Magdalen in flowing hair on the cover. In the hall the illegal commission appointed by James II used to sit, to subject the college to visitation, and deprive the Fellows of their rights. "The porter of the college threw down his keys. The butler refused to scratch Hough's name out of the buttery-book, and was instantly dismissed. No blacksmith could be found in the whole city who would force the lock of the President's lodgings."

We now pass out of the quadrangle into "Maudlin's learned grove," leaving on the left a range of new buildings, which, though spacious and comfortable, is sadly incongruous with the older edifice. It can hardly be credited that, with the same debased taste which produced these buildings, it had been intended to pull down, the old building, and upon its ruins erect a new one according to this style. Magdalen Grove or deer-park lies behind these buildings, crowded with fine old trees, and surrounded by an embattled wall. The sight of the deer from the water-walk is very pretty, as they tamely come up to the gate. The rushing sound of the Holywell mill-stream is mixed up with the murmur of the woods and the varied notes of birds. The famous Magdalen walk surrounds an irregularly-shaped meadow, and is more than half a mile long. One portion of it, a long, direct line of avenue, forming in summer-time a leafy natural cloister, where the refreshing vista seems indefinitely prolonged, is known by the name of Addison's Walk. Among the Magdalen trees there are two venerable wych-elm, which alone are left from the trees cut down in the time of Charles I. Seats are placed along the walk by the side of the Cherwell, where the visitor may leisurely enjoy the glimpses of city and grove, interrupted perhaps at times by the splash of oars. The river Cherwell farther on in its course furnishes an excellent bathing-place. This is called Parson's Pleasure, "which name is supposed to have been originally

'Parisians' Pleasure,' from being the resort of the French students." Standing in Magdalen Walk, on the other side of the Cherwell you see the modern church of St. Clement's, which has replaced a very old foundation. Properly speaking, it is divided from Oxford by the Cherwell, but for all municipal purposes it now makes part of the city.

Returning from Magdalen, it is only just a step over the way to look at the Botanical Garden. It was founded through the munificence of Henry Danvers, Earl of Danby, and has been augmented by royal and private liberality. The professor of botany is Dr. Daubeney, the senior Fellow of Magdalen. Dr. Daubeney has bestowed the utmost care and pains on the garden, and has chiefly made it the valuable and important domain which it is, and to him the garden is indebted for the interesting buildings which it possesses. The site was once occupied by the Jews as a burial-place: many of them were settled in Oxford before the conclusion of the thirteenth century. The gateway was designed by Inigo Jones, and its western side has figures of the two Charleses. The gardens fringe the borders of the river Cherwell, and give a fine view of the Merton Meadows. The two yew-trees at the entrance are supposed to represent, in Dutch fashion, giants on guard. The plants are laid out according to the systems of Linnæus and Jussieu, and have a considerable scientific value; but certainly the most popular feature in the Gardens consists of the collection of monkeys, which are sometimes regaled by the undergraduates with nuts, and sometimes with cigars. A portion of the ornamentation of the gardens, the statues just mentioned, was defrayed out of a fine inflicted upon Anthony Wood for a libel upon the great Earl of Clarendon, for which he was prosecuted by the second earl. We are sorry that poor Wood got into this trouble, for he was a writer on Oxford and its colleges to whom all subsequent writers are under the greatest obligations. If he offended, he appears to have acted in honesty, and was persecuted with severe and ill-becoming rancour.

It is old Wood's college to which we are now going—Merton College. The voluminous life of Wood prefixed to his works exhibits the very vivid contrast between ancient and modern Oxford. Wood was born in Oxford, and spent nearly all his life in the city and country, and his memoirs abound with graphic notices of the state of things during the Civil Wars. He was "a postmaster" at Merton (the old odd name given to those who held scholarships), and afterwards was bible-clerk. The ridiculous things he mentions belonging to the time when he was undergraduate exceed any possible absurdities of modern freshmen. When the parliamentary commissioners visited Oxford, he says, in humble phrase, that, his mother having a powerful friend, "he was conniv'd and kept in his place, otherwise he had infallibly gon to the pot." He very early addicted himself to studies of the Dryasdust order, but he had also "a natural and insatiable genie" for music; his most passionate love, however, was for history and heraldry. He perambulated Oxfordshire, copying inscriptions, studying various county histories, and describing his life between music and books as a perfect Elysium. He speaks of the "ravishment" and "great delight" with which he had gathered up antiquarian lore. One of his most cherished acquisitions was a pair of Selden's spectacles. The great scholar and statesman seems to have had the habit of putting spectacles in different books, and of quite forgetting where he had placed them. Wood had his griefs, however, when some old brasses at Merton were taken up by Commonwealthmen, and old pictures

spoiled, "to the sorrow of curious men that were admirers of antient painting." He records "the first day that the flying coach went from Oxon to London in one day." He was one of its six passengers; going up to town to consult the Cottonian Library: they started at six in the morning, and arrived in London at seven in the evening. He tells us that the Society of Merton would not let him live in the college, lest he should pluck it down to search after antiquities. Nevertheless, we find him going with the subwarden of Merton about some affair belonging to St. Peter-in-the-East. Later we find the warden of the college denouncing him as a disturber of the peace; and we dare say the old antiquary could make himself very troublesome and disagreeable. At the time of the Popish plot he came under some undeserved suspicion of being a Papist. He tells us that, when the news of the defeat of the Duke of Monmouth came, Merton College made a bonfire, as also did Christ Church, and there was one at Carfax as well. By-and-by King James came down on his memorable visit to Oxford, in which the King was sumptuously banqueted, and roundly lectured his entertainers. Wood survived till 1695. Dealing, in his "Athenæ Oxonienses," with men the memories of many of whom were yet fresh, he occasionally incurred the severe resentment of their representatives; and there is even some reason to believe that, if a man offended him, he revenged himself by writing his life. It is remarkable that the unfavourable strictures on Lord Clarendon which brought him into so much trouble were not written by himself, but he had them from Aubrey, whose character he has summed up in coarse, but quaint and forcible language: "He was a shiftless person, roving, and magotie-headed, and sometimes little better than crased, and, being exceedingly credulous, would stuff his many letters sent to A. W. with folleries and misinformations, which sometimes would guid him into the paths of error." We are told that "his behaviour was very well during his illness, was very patient and quiet, especially towards the latter end. He asked pardon of all that he had injured, and desired the prayers of all the public congregations." According to his own request, he was buried in Merton Chapel. He had once designed to write an account of the history and antiquities of Merton.

Wood lies in the ante-chapel, near the north door. His home used to be just opposite Merton, in a little stone house where he was born. Two other memorable monuments are close to his: that of Sir Thomas Bodley, the illustrious founder of the great library; and that of Sir Henry Savile, the wise and gentle provost of Eton, who issued a most magnificent edition of Chrysostom, and other valuable works, from the short-lived Eton press which he instituted. Had Wood perfected his design of writing a work on Merton, he would have found the subject peculiarly appropriate, as Merton is generally supposed to have given the origin and first example of the Oxford system. The students, instead of living in lodgings, without an effective discipline, as is still the case in Scottish and Continental universities, were now gathered within a common building under the superintendence of a head or master. It was intended that, without taking religious vows, they should live in a religious manner (*qui, non religiosi, religiose viverent*). Walter de Merton was Chancellor and Bishop of Rochester (A.D. 1260), and, as he especially venerated John the Baptist, he took the parish church of St. John the Baptist as the chapel to his college, enlarging it for the purpose. Walter's statue is over the gateway in front of the tower. He is represented in full pontificals, as listening to the preaching of John the Baptist in the

wilderness, the wilderness being crowded with grotesque animals, asses, unicorns, birds, and rabbits. The chapel, or church, is almost of cathedral-like proportions; it has been lavishly adorned with rich gifts, and presents many points worthy of examination. The windows are very remarkable, resembling those at Cologne, with which Walter de Merton was probably acquainted. The windows are fourteen in number, seven on either side: the original stained glass is of the same age as the stonework. The east window is called a Catherine-wheel window; a splendid example, filled with tracery and armorial bearings. A great deal of "restoration" has been effected by the eminent architect Mr. Butterfield; but the original design, which appears to have contemplated nave and side-aisles, has never been completed. The tower is very grand, and the piers which support it are beautifully proportioned. The edifice is used as a parish church, where the services, according to the writer's recollections, are very hearty, and the attendance exceedingly good.

New things and old meet in Merton. Some of the latest University improvements, and unquestionably many of the oldest Oxford reliques, are also associated with this college. The Library quadrangle has probably undergone the minimum of change since the time of Richard III. The library itself has been justly designated as "one of the earliest, and perhaps now the most genuine ancient library in this kingdom." It was built, indeed, before printing was invented, and, besides some curious manuscripts, has some of the earliest printed works, and is especially rich in Bibles. Almost to the close of the last century the books used to be chained to their places. The library has a quaint oriel window, with curious Dutch painted glass, with figures of Virtues and Vices. There is a noble archway between the two quadrangles, whose vaulted roof has zodiac signs around the arms of Henry VII, which occupy the place of the sun. The hall has been modernized by Wyatt, but the doorway and old oak floor are here still. So also have the warden's lodgings: they contain a superb malachite vase which the Emperor Alexander presented to the Society, who hospitably entertained him in 1814. The building called the Treasury is one of the earliest examples of English domestic architecture, with a high-pitched ashlar roof belonging to the thirteenth century. A morass once stretched on the western side of the college, where is now a nursery garden. "People rowed up to Merton College buttery to refresh themselves. Most part of the wall on this side was formerly built on arches, because the ground was so low and plashy. In Stephen's time this wall was inaccessible, by reason of deep water encompassing it on every side." There is a curious old custom at Merton, which corresponds with one at Pembroke. When dinner is over, the senior Fellow strikes the table three times with a trencher. The sound brings up the butler, who then enters on his book what each Fellow has received from the buttery. Then the grace-cup is handed round, and, the trencher being struck once more, the bible-clerk says grace. A time used to be observed at this college called Merton Black Night. The men used to break open the buttery and kitchen, and help themselves to whatever came handiest. A curious and remote origin is ascribed to this extraordinary custom. When the famous Duns Scotus was Dean, one of the collegians, Ockham, afterwards the celebrated schoolman and logician, asked him, "Master, what are we to do now?" The Dean unguardedly answered, "Go and do whatever you like." Ockham and his friends took the permission in its strictest liberality, and bounded away

to devour the contents of kitchen and buttry. So, at least, runs the Merton legend.

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, the present Minister from the United States of America to Great Britain, is descended from a family of American statesmen. In fact, he pre-

was also born at Braintree, Massachusetts, on the 11th of July, 1767. He graduated at Harvard in 1787, and from 1794 to 1800 was American Minister to Holland, England, Sweden, and Prussia. From 1806 to 1808 he was Professor of Rhetoric at Harvard University. In 1809 he went as American Minister to Russia; assisted at the Treaty of Ghent in 1814, and also at the Convention of Commerce with Great Britain, in 1815. He was Secretary of State under President Monroe, President



Charles Francis Adams.

sents in his own person the only instance in America—and an instance rarely to be met with in any country in the world—of the representative of a family, in direct descent, of the third generation, holding a position as a statesman corresponding to those held by his father and grandfather.

John Adams, the grandfather of the present minister, and the first of the family who made for himself a prominent name in the world, was born at Braintree, a village of the State of Massachusetts, on the 30th of October, 1735. He graduated at Harvard University in 1755, and soon afterwards removed to the village of Quincy, where he occupied himself in teaching a class in Latin and Greek. Of his career as a public man we have, in a recent number, given some account. He died in retirement on his farm at Quincy, Massachusetts, on the 4th July, 1826.

John Quincy Adams, the father of the present minister,

of the United States in 1825, and from 1831 until his death, on the 23rd of February, 1848, he represented the State of Massachusetts in Congress. Like the elder Pitt, he was stricken in old age by the hand of death while performing his legislative duties. He died in the Speaker's room two days after falling from his seat in the House of Representatives; the last words he uttered being, "This is the end of earth; I am content." Like his father, John Quincy Adams was a voluminous author. His published works are "Letters on Silesia," "Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory," and various poems. His unpublished works would fill many volumes.

Charles Francis Adams, the present minister—whose portrait we present to our readers—was born at Boston, Massachusetts, on the 18th of August, 1807. In 1809, when only two years of age, he was taken by his father to Russia, whence he returned to the United States in 1817. In 1821 he entered as a student at Harvard

College, where he graduated in due course of time, and in 1829 he married a young lady of his native State. In 1841-2-3 he was a member of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, and was a member of the Senate of the same State during 1844 and 1845. In 1848 he was a candidate for the vice-presidency of the United States, on the "Free Soil" ticket, with Mr. Martin Van Buren, who was then the candidate of that party for the presidency; but he failed to carry his election. He was first elected to represent his native State in the Federal Congress in 1858, and took his seat in December 1859. He was not, however, long permitted to retain this position, since, in March 1861, when President Lincoln—elected the November previous—took his seat as chief magistrate of the United States, Mr. Adams was nominated Minister to Great Britain, with the general approbation of all the more intelligent classes of his countrymen. He sailed from Boston in April, and arrived in London in the month of May of the same year. It is not necessary that we should remark on the manner in which Mr. Adams has fulfilled his high duties in this country. Those who are familiar with the history of the late American war can alone comprehend all the difficulty of the position in which Mr. Adams was placed. His bearing of mingled courtesy and firmness, in trying political circumstances, has not only added to his reputation at home, but has secured to him the respect of the people of Great Britain, and especially of the Government, and those high officials with whom he has been more frequently brought into familiar contact.

In the State of Massachusetts, where his family has been settled for generations, where the people are familiar with the courtesy and kindness which distinguish him in his social and domestic life, Mr. Adams is the object of universal esteem. The comparatively bleak and sterile States of New England, and the State of Massachusetts particularly, have given birth to more distinguished statesmen, and other men of remarkable talent and ability, than all the remaining States of the Union. Daniel Webster, Douglas, Prescott, Everett, Hawthorne, and a host of others whose names are familiar to the people of England, and who have acquired fame and distinction in their native land, were natives of the New England States. One reason for this, we may remark by the way, may be that the comparative sterility of these States calls for a greater exertion of their energies on the part of their people; but no doubt the chief reason is that throughout New England, from the period of its earliest settlement by the Pilgrim Fathers, education has been a primary object with the people. It formed part of the original covenant no less than protection to life, liberty, and property. The two principal colleges in the United States are situated in New England—Harvard, in Massachusetts, and Yale, in Connecticut. High schools and common schools abound in every town and district, and the advantages of education are free, and open to all classes of the people. Nowhere else, even in America, are school teachers held in such high estimation, or so liberally remunerated for their services. The Professors at Harvard and Yale are men of the highest social position, as well as men of great learning and ability; and the Masters of the Latin and English schools in Boston receive from the State each 2400 dollars a year, or only 100 dollars less than the Governor of the State of Massachusetts. Where such facilities for the acquirement of education exist, and where learning is held in such high estimation, it is little wonder that the New England States should be, as it were, the brain of the Union, or that their children should acquire distinction in almost every profession.

Quincy, the residence of the Adams' family since the time of John Adams, second President of the United States, is a post-village and township in Norfolk County, Massachusetts, situated on Quincy Bay, in Boston Harbour, and about eight miles distant from the city of Boston. The township is celebrated for its granite quarries, which have enriched the Quincy family—the original founders of the village, and connected by marriage with the Adamses—as well as the Adamses themselves, and other proprietors. The Quincy granite quarries give constant employment to about 1000 persons; and it was at Quincy that the first railroad in use in the United States was constructed, in 1826. This railroad ran a length of three miles, from the quarries to the harbour, and was built and employed for the purpose of conveying the granite to the shipping, for transportation to other parts of the Union. The village of Quincy was the birthplace of John Hancock and Josiah Quincy, as well as of the second John Quincy Adams. It boasts also of a handsome stone church, which was erected at a cost of 40,000 dollars, and which contains two costly and beautifully finished monuments to the memory of John Adams and his wife. The estates of the Quincy family are considered to be the finest in New England. Mr. Adams chiefly resides on the family estate at the village of Quincy, where he possesses an elegant country seat; but he has likewise a town residence in Beacon Street, Boston, near Boston Common—a fine, well laid out, and well wooded and watered park of eighty acres, to which is attached a botanical garden containing about twenty acres.*

STOCK-EXCHANGE NOTES.

V.—COMMITTEE OF THE STOCK EXCHANGE.

WE have seen, in the course of our foregoing observations, that the laws, or usages, or whatever they may be called, which govern many proceedings of the Stock Exchange are of a kind which do not commend themselves much to the moral sense. In some respects they run counter to the law of the land, and in others they systematically ignore it. The law recognises no exclusion of the public from the markets, but the dealers in stock shut the public from the markets in which they deal, and expel them by force if they dare to enter. The law inflicts summary punishment upon those who obtain goods upon false pretences; but Bears and Bulls claim the privilege of setting up any pretence, however false, to augment their profits, and do so with impunity. The law of the land punishes those who conspire to defraud others; but the "riggers" conspire at their pleasure on the Stock Exchange, and plunder the public of enormous sums, the victims being often quite aware of the working of the conspiracy, yet utterly powerless to interpose and protect themselves. What, then, is the constitution of an association which permits to its members the exercise of such injurious privileges? The Stock Exchange is governed by a committee of twenty-eight, with a chairman and deputy-chairman elected annually by the members: their power is absolute, and their decision upon all matters coming under their jurisdiction is final. Their business is to enforce the rules of the Stock Exchange, which are about 160 in number, and which are said to meet all cases that can possibly occur in the experience of the association; and they

* We are indebted for the dates and facts relative to the birth and public life of the present minister from the United States, to the courtesy of Mr. Henry Adams, the son of the minister, and to Mr. Moran, for many years the Secretary of Legation in London.

have the power of making new rules to meet any emergency that may arise. They hold regular fortnightly meetings; but the chairman and deputy-chairman, or any five of the members, can at their option call a special meeting at any time. The committee is comprised of men of unblemished character and high standing, and no man upon whose reputation there is, or ever has been, the least taint, need aspire to be admitted to their body.

When, more than a century ago, time bargains were, by Sir John Barnard's Act, declared to be illegal, and when that Act was pooh-poohed by the speculators of those days, and became virtually a dead letter, the committee, in order to afford some protection to the public, enacted a set of rules, which were probably as stringent as they could obtain a sanction for from those expected to conform to them. One of these rules in a manner stood in the place of the rejected Act of Parliament, inasmuch as it was framed with a view to restrain the too eager speculation in time bargains, as far as regards new undertakings, and to keep them within reasonable bounds, by making them dependent upon the sanction of the committee. The rule was to the effect that all bargains made in shares not quoted in the share lists—that is, for shares in undertakings not yet afloat—should be considered as made “for the settlement;” so that any broker selling shares at a given price should be held as undertaking to deliver them at that price on the day which the committee should appoint as the settling-day. It will be seen that this rule was a really effective power in the hands of the committee, and one which, if exercised with discrimination in the public interest, must be a great boon to the outsider. For, as no bargains could be consummated until settling-day, and as the committee alone had the power of appointing a settling-day, it was always at their discretion to quash the time bargains altogether, by simply refusing to appoint a settling-day at all. This rule is in force at the present hour, and the public have been indebted to it again and again for protection from heavy losses, while its operation has tended for more than a century to abate and moderate the trickery, roguery, and deception which are always more or less active when a new company is in the pangs of birth.

“Settling-day” is a term of vital significance to a new company, especially if it has been struggling hard for existence, and the promoters have reason to fear an opposition before the committee. As a rule, the committee will appoint a settling-day for transactions in shares in a new undertaking, if no allegation of fraud or misrepresentation is substantiated, provided sufficient scrip or shares be ready for delivery, and if two-thirds at least of the shares have been applied for and allotted unconditionally to the public, and the deposit paid thereon. When application is made for a settling-day—and the longer a new company delays to make such application, after their shares have been ready for allotment, the less likely they are to get it—notice is given, and if any persons think proper to oppose the application, they have an opportunity of doing so when the board meets. The persons most likely to oppose the settlement are men who have contracted to deliver shares which they have not got, and cannot buy save at a price higher than they have agreed to deliver them at: they usually allege that unfair means have been used to hoist up prices, and perhaps they will adduce evidence of some combination among the promoters or their agents to bring this about. If they can prove their allegations, the committee will not grant a settlement; so that all bargains are at once quashed, and the public, who have bought at a fictitious

price, are released from their contracts, and entitled to the repayment of their deposits. Sometimes the opposition to a settlement is made on far different grounds, as in the following case, which we quote from the report of an eye-witness, as given in a recent number of the “Pall Mall Gazette,” and which powerfully exemplifies the beneficial action of the Stock-Exchange Committee as protectors of the public, and the paramount necessity of such action.

The committee and their chairman were seated in their board-room. “Opposite the chairman,” says the eye-witness, “is seated the secretary of a public company (limited), who has applied for a ‘settlement;’ next to him is a man most carefully dressed—perhaps too carefully; he is a large shareholder, but one whose name has been objected to by the ‘opposition.’ For this is one of those cases where the settlement is opposed, and the committee have to decide the dispute. Seated on either side of these gentlemen are some seven or eight witnesses. The parties who opposed the settlement had alleged that the so-called list of allottees or shareholders was largely made up of ‘dummies,’ and the well-dressed ‘large shareholder’ was there in person, to prove that he at least was no dummy. The chairman asked, ‘Did you apply for 200 shares?’ ‘I did.’ ‘Of course you paid £200 on application?’ ‘I did.’ ‘And £400 more on allotment?’ ‘I did.’ ‘How?’ ‘In bank-notes, I believe.’ ‘Not by cheque?’ ‘No.’ ‘Was it your own money?’ ‘I had the control of it.’ ‘When was this?’ ‘On the 20th and 26th of July.’ Up jumped one of the witnesses, a poorly-dressed man, a tailor, and, handing a slip of paper to the chairman, said, ‘What does this man say? I became security for him on that bill for £12, and was threatened with arrest on the 23rd. Where is this £600? I have many a time lent him a shilling to purchase a dinner, and he owes me now fifty or sixty pounds.’ It was further shown that this gentleman had no settled place of abode, and, in short, could not be found when wanted. Another man was set down in the list as holding 150 shares, to whom it was objected that he could not possibly be a *bonâ fide* shareholder, as he had been living in apartments at a few shillings a week, and had changed his lodgings four times in three months. ‘Who says that Mr. — has changed his lodgings four times in three months?’ asks the secretary. ‘I do,’ says a witness. ‘And pray what are you?’ ‘A butcher.’ ‘And how do you know?’ ‘Because I served him in three places, and refused to serve him in the fourth; and there is my bill, £2 15s. 11d., and I want my money.’ ‘This is a very small affair,’ says the secretary, smiling. ‘So much the worse,’ replies the practical and clear-sighted chairman. Several other shareholders, whose cases were not so fully gone into, were proved to be living in single rooms in some of the lowest streets in Westminster and elsewhere. One, who resided a short distance from town (but the longest possible distance from the sheriff’s officer), and who held 150 shares, was proved to be at the very time keeping his doors barred to prevent the execution of a judgment for £12. Can there be any wonder that the committee unanimously voted ‘no settlement?’ Some persons who knew how the shares were to be allotted had contrived, by employing ten or twelve brokers, to purchase for the first settling-day some 2000 shares at about two premium, and seemed to think ten premium too small a profit. But ‘no settlement’ was fatal to their hopes.”

Notwithstanding such exposures as the above, which occasionally take place, there are not wanting objections to the system of making contracts contingent upon the

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appointment of a settling-day; and there have been from time to time some agitations against it. Objectors say that a bargain is a bargain, and that those who make contracts ought to fulfil them, irrespective of other people's sanction. But, on the other hand, it is rightly urged that, in all cases where the committee refuses a settlement, no contract is violated by its non-fulfilment, because it was of the essence of the contract that a settling-day should be appointed, and if none is appointed the contract is not broken, but simply annulled. Further, it is in the power of persons dealing in shares to stand aloof from the action of the committee if they choose to do so, by a special agreement: this was, in fact, done in the case of the Confederate Loan, which, from its character, was precluded from the sanction of the committee; and the same thing has been done in other undertakings, and may be done at any time by an agreement between the contracting parties.

Latterly the subject of "settling-day" has been discussed at some length in the financial organs in the city, some of whom seem to take it for granted that in a short time the Stock-Exchange Committee will relinquish the power they have so long exercised for the general good, and leave all contracts for the sale of shares as free from limitation as are all other business transactions. If, as was pointed out above, the rule which enables them to quash iniquitous transactions by refusing a settlement was passed, in order to afford that protection to the public which the law could not give, owing to Sir John Barnard's Act, which had rendered time-bargains illegal, it is plain that the repeal of that Act, by rendering such bargains legal, has done away with the original necessity for their interference. But it does not follow that on that account a rule which for so long a period has been found to work beneficially for the public should be abolished. If there were no such supervision as that of the committee over the business of the share-market, and no hearing for objectors to any new scheme, however fraudulent it might be, speculation would in a little time become ten times more reckless and unscrupulous than we have ever known it to be, and the rogues, cheats, and impostors who now infest the share-market would soon become its undisputed masters. How long they would remain so is another question. There is a limit to the patience of the public, who, though they will stand a good deal of plucking, so long as they can see even the semblance of fair play, will grow restive and outrageous under the pressure of a palpable fraud. Should the committee abandon its rule, the public will be clamouring very soon for some other protection; and what protection they are to get, unless it be by a fitting alteration of our criminal laws, which should render Bear, Bull, Broker, and Jobber alike amenable to arrest and imprisonment for conspiracy to defraud, does not appear. Surely it were better that the fraternity congregating round Chapel Court should continue to be subject to the mild jurisdiction and modified reproof of a tribunal of their own selection, rather than allow their differences and disputes to gravitate, as, from their moral complexion, they have a growing tendency to do, towards the avenging Rhadamanthus of the Old Bailey.

ABOUT FLIES.

"Of all flies," said a friend to me one day—"Of all flies, save me from your busy, black, stinging fly, that whizzes about with the most innocent air possible, and, while you are looking at him as harmless, gives you a poisonous

little prick, which in two or three days becomes an irritating swelling, that gives you no rest until the venom inflaming it dies away."

I quite agreed with him about the flies, having often suffered from them; and it struck me, on reflection, that these flies stand as a type of the small and harmless things, in appearance, that interfere with our peace, and often entirely overcast life with shadows.

Let us instance a few of these moral flies.

Suspicious, poisonous flies they are.

My neighbour Thompson is in good circumstances, in good health, and in good reputation. If you look at his condition, turn it round and over, you will be forced to say, It is good to be Thompson! But Thompson is bitten by suspicion. He has a law-suit. He has the highest opinion, in the main, of his lawyer; but, after a conference with him, his face will become careworn, vexed, and anxious: something in the conversation to which he is able to give a double meaning is misinterpreted by him. He doubts whether he is getting fair play. He turns over in his memory the expression of face, the tone of voice, the words themselves, till he has made them into something very evil, and quite unlike the truth; and he goes to bed out of sorts, loses his sleep, and gets up bilious and miserable.

He has an excellent servant, who, being rather obtuse in sensibility, passes unhurt through the fire that is continually scorching his master. In plain English, the suspicions he gives rise to, most innocently, are not known to him. If he is very alert in his work, from feeling in more cheery spirits perhaps, Thompson immediately suspects he is going to ask for a holiday, and runs over, in anticipation, all the inconvenience he must endure in his absence. If he lags in his work, as all do sometimes, he is sure that he means to give him warning, and frets and fumes at the loss before him. If he sees him talking to a neighbour's servant, he is sure at once that they are comparing notes about wages, and that he shall be pounced upon for a *rise*! One way or another, this excellent servant is always troubling his peace—unconsciously.

But his sister is worse. It must be a feature in the Thompson family. She is married, and has a large household to superintend; and how, with all her advantages in life, she manages to *live* is a wonder. Her husband cannot speak low to a friend but she fancies it is something detrimental to her. Her children are fairly drilled into deceiving her by her constant suspicions of them—and as to her servants! Of course she is always changing them; for women are quicker in feeling imputations than men, and she has more than once narrowly escaped an action for defamation through her unwarrantable suspicions growing too manifest to be borne, and arriving at charges.

If Thompson is occasionally or frequently bilious and miserable, his sister is never anything else. Her face is cadaverous, her eyes restless, her manner hurried, her voice quivering; and if you look kindly at her, feeling for her evident discomfort, she immediately suspects that you have heard something—something you do not like to tell—about her children or servants; nor can you easily persuade her to the contrary.

"You have a nice housemaid," I said, the last evening I spent with her.

"Yes; if she does not get spoilt," she replied. I observed that as the evening advanced she looked increasingly uneasy; at last, inviting me to her room, she led me to the window.

"Do you hear that?" she whispered.

"What?"

"That talking."

"Oh yes, I hear talking. Why?"

"Why? That is my new housemaid with the gardener next door."

"Are you certain it is?"

"I have no doubt of it."

"Well, what if it should be?" I asked.

"I have absolutely forbidden all gossip of the kind," she said, trembling with vexation.

"But surely when her work is done——" I began.

"But it is *not* done. I gave her needlework to do, on purpose to keep her in."

Then, going to the bell, she rang it violently. The housemaid appeared, looking astonished.

"I thought I desired you *not* to go into the next garden in the evenings, wasting your time in gossip," said my friend, white with agitation, which gave her the appearance of being in a bad temper.

"Yes, ma'am," said the girl, colouring.

"And where have you been this evening?"

"Down-stairs at work," said the girl.

"Down-stairs! I heard you talking in that garden."

"I've been down-stairs at work," said the girl, angrily, and, leaving the room, banged the door after her.

"Isn't it very hard I can't speak to a servant without getting such impertinence?" my friend said to me, almost in tears.

Almost directly after the housemaid returned to the room, saying she didn't like to be suspected, and would leave that day month; adding that she wouldn't mind a scolding now and then, but she couldn't live where she was always being suspected.

So, in addition to the fancied grievance of being disobeyed, my poor friend had the actual one of losing a good servant. So much for suspicion.

But are we always to take things at the surface, and people at their word? By no means. Proper caution, fair investigation, is due to ourselves and others; but it is English law to consider every man innocent till he is proved guilty, and the habit of always condemning till innocence is proved is as unconstitutional as it is unwise and un-Christian. There are few people who would not rather be openly charged with an offence than covertly branded with it: there is fair play in the first—self-defence and refutation are possible; but there is no meeting the second. But the effects on others cannot be compared with those on the harbourer of suspicion. Darkness and clouds must fill the heart that suspicion inhabits: The higher the sun is in the sky, the shorter are the shadows; and the more light of charity there is in the soul, the fewer and fainter will be the suspicions. Charity answers all things: it makes the too careless wiser and more heedful; it gives to the narrow-minded some of the length and depth and breadth and height which are its own dimensions.

But now for another fly.

A short memory: that is able to give a smart prick on occasions. By a short memory understand the habit of forgetting.

Betsy quite forgot to set the alarum that calls her in the morning, so found her way down-stairs at eight instead of six. She quite forgot to make up her fire before going to her up-stairs work, so found it nearly out when she came to put down the meat for dinner. She quite forgot to pepper the hash, to sugar the tart, to scald the milk, to shut the dairy door; so that your dinner is spoilt, when you chance to get it, your milk makes curds in your tea, and you cannot touch the butter that the cat has been favouring with a taste. She would not for a year's wages give you

pain, yet she helps you to a stiff neck by leaving your window open behind the curtain, or gives you a headache for the day by leaving open all doors that ought to be shut, and that keep up a concert of banging throughout the night, so that sleep is in vain. You have to look for all you want, and never can find it, for it is never in its right place; you are always in a hurry, because you are always kept waiting; and can never get beforehand because she is always—through forgetting—behindhand. And yet she is a kind-hearted, amiable girl—really attached to you, never out of temper, a pleasant face, a pleasant manner, knows how to cook, and does not shirk work—*only*, she forgets! that's the fly!

Now who would arraign Thompson and his sister at the bar of the Old Bailey for being suspicious, or Betsy for forgetting? These are "unfortunate failings," we say—nothing criminal in them! Thompson and his sister would deserve all that the most eulogistic epitaph ever attributed to humanity, in the way of praise; and, as to Betsy, her "character" is unimpeachable; and yet to live with either is to make your bow to comfort, so entirely that peace is seriously affected.

There are many more flies; but we will catch but one more, and that is the habit of procrastinating. "The thief of time" it is called; and a most incorrigible one it is, and such a heaper up of work too!

Why is that pile of unanswered letters there?

Because answering them as they came was *put off*.

Why does that man look so over-wrought?

Because he puts off this and that work, and so carries them all on his mind!

Why does that man look so disappointed?

Because he failed to ask for what he wanted at the right time, and so lost it!

Why didn't that man with a large family get into that convenient house, instead of screwing himself up in that small one?

Because he put off applying for it, and it was let over his head!

Well, enough of flies: the great thing is how to catch them.

We may all call to mind a neighbour bitten by either one of those we have spoken of, or some of the numerous others that molest us; but, as there are few characters free from some predominant infirmity, the wise way is to look at home, and consider what there is to remedy them, and how to remedy it. Since there is no teaching that comes home like example, overcoming an evil habit in ourselves may lead to the freeing of many others from the same, or worse.

There are precepts fitted for every need—good ointment to kill the flies and cure the wounds—in our universal recipe-book; and the sooner we go to work the better, before the habits are inveterate, and become, as it were, a portion of ourselves.

"Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour" (Eccles. x. 1). In the margin it is "flies of death." How expressive! We cannot end with a more comprehensive summing up. The phrase reminds us of those terrible pests of which we read in books of African travel, *tsetse* they are called, which destroy the animals in which they succeed in fixing their poisonous stings. If we would keep our reputation for wisdom and honour unblemished, let us look sharp after our dead flies—"flies of death" truly, since they are potent enemies to us in this life, and no friends as to that which is to come.